



## Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation

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## Division of Standards Finds Satisfactory Seafood Weighing this Summer

Boston, MA (August 8, 2017) - The Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, in conjunction with the Division of Standards, recently completed a seafood weighing survey of retail stores across Massachusetts.

A total of 54 retail stores in 44 cities and towns were inspected, resulting in more than \$800 in fines. Short-weight violations and overcharges were discovered in nine stores, including four Stop & Shop locations. Fines included a \$150.00 dollar citation for a \$2.70 overcharge on a lobster purchase, a .20 cent overcharge on a purchase of sea scallops, and a \$75.00 citation for a \$1.40 overcharge on a lobster purchase. In total, six percent of the items inspected were found to be overcharged.

"It is the primary mission of the Division of Standards to ensure and enforce pricing accuracy," said Consumer Affairs Undersecretary John Chapman. "While fluctuations in weighing may seem marginal to some, a continuous failure of a retailer to make the proper allowance for the weight of a container or wrapping material can add up to a significant amount of overcharges and create an unfair competitive advantage over other retailers."

In all the stores where inspectors found violations, the overcharges were the direct result of the scale operator not allowing for the weight of the packaging material or not deducting a sufficient allowance for the packaging material. Massachusetts law requires all sales to be net weight at the time of sale. Inspectors from the Division of Standards also check that seafood scales for weighing lobster have an opening for water drainage and that each piece of fish displayed for sale is weighed.

The Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation along with its five agencies work together to achieve two goals: to protect and empower consumers through advocacy and education, and to ensure a fair playing field for all Massachusetts businesses. The Office also oversees the state's lemon laws, data breach reporting, home improvement contractor program, and the state's Do Not Call Registry. Follow the office at its [blog](#), on [Facebook](#), and on Twitter [@Mass\\_Consumer](#).